

Fall 2018 Newsletter # 23



Richard Reed passes on the Len LaFreniere trophy to Joanne Turpin for 2018

Way to Go Joanne!!

The Prez Sez

Dennis McCullough

Best wishes to all for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! There's another year in the books, and lots of experiences to go with it. In this issue of the newsletter we tried to focus on the experiences we have had, as individuals or as a group, together or apart – that is part of what binds us together as divers, as a community.

The building blocks of diving are often referred to as the four E's – education, experience, equipment and environment. Each feeds the others and the result is a continual growth, or maybe development is a better word, as a diver, and as divers develop, so does the community. Each person we meet, each experience we undergo, each different piece of equipment we use, each environment we visit changes us and adds to us. Sometimes we may not notice the development for some time, but at other times, we notice immediately.

Over the past ten years, since the club was created, we've seen a lot of people come and some have stayed longer than others. Some have had a profound impact immediately while with others the influence has been more subtle and slower to be felt. And there are those who have exerted an influence for a long period of time. But each has been part of the meeting new people and having new experiences.

It has been my privilege to be involved in some part of the training of many of the divers, and they have certainly had an impact on my life. There was the oldest – at 79 years young when she took the OWSD course, and 83 when she got to dive with the fish. We met three very reluctant (at the time) people with very real fears and anxieties (one of whom made it clear in very clear terms that there were no plans in the future for #&!@##* diving) who have overcome those concerns and gone on to become certified divers, and competent ones too! We've met some with major physical disabilities who mastered the skills to enjoy the world of diving. I tip my hat to them all – I don't know that I would have jumped in with such baggage.

We have lost some too – health issues that should remind all of us that there are risks involved in diving, and indeed in life. Let us not forget them or their contributions.

Often, at this time of year, we focus on family and friends more than at other times of the year. Let's try, this coming year, to focus on having at least one more experience with this unique family of friends united in the enjoyment of the spirit of diving, good experiences, good education, getting a good education, in a great environment. Let's dive safely and have fun doing it.

The best of the season to everyone!

BSC News

Beach Clean-Up

Dennis McCullough

On July 21, divers from the Battlefords Scuba Community celebrated Women's Dive Day with a Beach Clean-up at the Turtle Lake Lodge on Turtle Lake. The event was hosted by Allan and Janalee Rumpf and family. The numbers were small but the enthusiasm was high.

The Turtle Lake Watershed posted notice of the event on their Facebook page to aid in the publicity. I think they were successful as there were many boats and water craft in the area and a number came to investigate the buoys and markers. It kept Janalee in her kayak busy warning them away from the divers below. Allan as always captained the pontoon boat and kept it close to the divers in case they needed the boat.

Four divers swept the bottom at the drop-off (where the ice fishermen congregate in the winter). When the silt settled, the divers had recovered twenty-four lures, eight empty bottles, six empty cans, one full bottle of hooch, one hatchet, one ice ladle and three boat anchors – there was a fourth one that did not get raised.

The day ended with a potluck barbecue in the back yard at the Rumpf cabin and as always there were stories to be told and ideas swapped.

The plan is to go back to the same spot again this coming summer, about mid-July, and repeat the day, this time hopefully with more divers. Watch for further information on this fun-filled event.



BSC News continued

DAN First Aid

Dennis McCullough

Most of us know of DAN as that agency that is there to help divers find a recompression chamber if they need one in a foreign country, or the agency with the good dive insurance package. They have oxygen equipment and first aid supplies for sale, and some books. But there is more to DAN than this. DAN is also in the first aid business.

This past spring Tracy Wilson-Gerwing and I had the opportunity to take part in the DAN First Aid course and the ensuing Instructor course hosted by the Battlefords Scuba Community. This course is specifically geared to divers and this sets it apart from most other first aid courses. The other big difference is that the course is set up in modules that can be combined to suit the situation or done separately for certification in that specific area. The modules are:

- Basic Life Support
- CPR for the Health Care Provider
- Emergency Oxygen for Diving Injuries
- First Aid for Hazardous Marine Life Injuries
- Neurological Assessment

Combined the five modules become the Diver Emergency Management Provider course. Beyond the DEMP course there is a First Aid for Professional Divers course that is geared to Divemaster level and up candidates. The DEMP is somewhat beyond the usual Standard First Aid certification in that it deals with use of a bag valve mask, and if one is doing the modules individually this appears in the CPR for the Health Care Provider and Emergency Oxygen courses. There is a little less attention paid to first aid for children as diving does not include many infants and small children. The Hazardous Marine Life Injuries section is much more detailed than anything else I have seen.

The theory modules are set up to be done on-line, although, in special circumstances, this may be worked around. When the on-line work is completed, the inviting Instructor is notified and a time can be established to do the practical applications and final exam(s). When everything is complete, the participant is approved by the Instructor and the participant is sent a certification card on-line – good for two years. This format makes it easy to fit the course into people's schedules.

Each module has a plastic slate that summarizes the highlights to that module – a good reminder during an emergency situation. And they will fit nicely in any dive bag.

DAN has developed another interesting, useful and well-prepared course called Prepared Diver. It encapsulates many of the things divers learn in the basic Open Water Scuba Diver certification and the Advanced Diver course along with items from the speciality training courses. Through video clips and some classroom presentations the participants are reminded of things that they may have forgotten or simply chosen not to practice, questions that should be asked of dive operators in new locations, and simply good diving practices that make for safer and more enjoyable diving. This is a really good presentation for those of us who have gotten into a customary routine – it serves as a reality check against the current best practices.

Keep an eye open for these courses being offered. You are likely to find them interesting and useful.

BSC News continued



*Dan First Aid Course Participants
March 2018*

The Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) Show 2018

By Tracy Wilson-Gerwing

Entering the DEMA exhibit hall was like walking into the ultimate diving warehouse. It was almost overwhelming. Exhibitors included multiple scuba certification agencies, Divers Alert Network, non-profit organizations, scuba equipment manufacturers, and multiple travel destinations. Attendees included Influencers (instructors, divemasters, etc), international distributors, manufacturer representatives, travel agents, as well as other industry professionals.

I spent almost two full days going through the exhibits perusing the wares and talking to manufacturers, distributors, sales people, resort operators, and other attendees. In addition to the exhibits, there are multiple workshops (both DEMA-sponsored and exhibitor-sponsored) that take place throughout the show.

One of the highlights of DEMA 2018 was attending the Women Divers Hall of Fame (WDHOF) "Flippers 'N Flappers" event. Having connected with Cristina Zenato at Divescapes, I reached out to her to see if it was possible for us to get together at DEMA. She passed along the invitation to "Flippers 'N Flappers" as an opportunity for us to get together again and benefit the WDHOF. Although Cristina and I only had a short amount of time to visit, I did get to meet other fascinating members of the diving community.

Other notable moments included being able to catch up with Keith Sahn of FORCE BLUE (whom I met at Divescapes), meeting Girls That Scuba founder Sarah Richardson, and having coffee with Jill Heinerth to discuss a cave diving course.

Divescapes 2018

By Tracy Wilson-Gerwing

In October of this year, I had the opportunity to travel to Calgary to attend Divescapes. The Alberta Underwater Council, who are responsible for putting together this scuba conference and exhibition, have described Divescapes as being “THE place to see top tier speakers and exhibitors, and to attend fun and educational seminars and workshops”.

Divescapes kicked off Friday afternoon with a Wreck Diver 101 Workshop by Richie Kohler where he spoke about the importance of getting to know the history of the wrecks you are diving on and the jurisdictional laws that protect the wrecks. Kohler is probably best known as the co-host of Deep Sea Detectives, but his adventures and expeditions have taken him to Titanic, Andrea Doria and Britannic. His keynote presentation on Saturday focused on his multiple expeditions to Britannic. Friday evening closed out with an informal social.

Saturday was filled with presentations and trade show booths during the breaks.

Cristina Zenato is a shark expert, a conservationist and a cave explorer. Widely known as “The Shark Whisperer” – a nickname she is not fond of – Cristina is working to change people’s perception of sharks and to promote shark conservation. The special relationship that Cristina shares with her sharks in the Bahamas and her passion for her work comes to life as she draws you in to her presentation.

Keith Sahn, co-founder of FORCE BLUE, shared their “mission therapy” approach for former combat divers which is currently focused on coral reef conservation, preservation and restoration. Essentially, FORCE BLUE provides veterans with their “next mission” by teaching them that their skills and training can be re-tooled and deployed to make a positive difference.

Erik Brown was one of the cave rescuers of the Thai “Wild Boars” soccer team. At Divescapes, he gave his first presentation about the rescue. Originally from British Columbia, Brown captivated the audience while he humbly recounted his role, talked about misinformation in the media, and shared some of his personal stories from the rescue efforts.

Additional speakers included Natalie Gibb (Under the Jungle), Jared Hires (Dive Rite), Tricia Stovel and Russell Clark (SeaProof TV), Nick Lucey and Aaron Faulls (Into the Drink), and Sherri Ferguson (Simon Fraser University).

Sunday wrapped up with a DCS – Decompression Sickness Workshop and a Discover Rebreathers! Workshop. I attended the rebreather workshop at Adventures in Scuba. Led by Terry Forsyth and Jared Hires, there was a brief classroom introduction before the pool session.

Trying the rebreathers reminded me of my very first scuba session where I spent the majority of the time on the bottom of the pool. Despite my lack of buoyancy, the lure and challenge of rebreathers had me hooked in a very short span of time.

There was a lot of hype leading up to Divescapes, and the experience ultimately surpassed my expectations. I look forward to attending again in 2020.

BSC News continued

Wainwright Pumpkin Dive 2018

By Tracy Wilson-Gerwing

I love diving and I love all things Hallowe'en so when I first heard about the Alberta Adventure Divers Pumpkin Dive, I knew I had to take part in it. Carving a pumpkin underwater was not something I had ever imagined doing, but I knew it was going to be a pretty cool experience.

Alberta Adventure Divers hosted their annual Pumpkin Dive at Clear Lake, Alberta on September 29, 2018. The temperature hovered around the freezing mark as we arrived at the lake to get everything set up. After getting registered, Connie and Dave Faas of Alberta Adventure Divers provided the briefing for the two scheduled dives.

The first dive was the Mystery Dive. This year, the Mystery Dive was a word scramble. Divers had to get the scrambled words off of a number of ghosts that were placed at various attractions in the lake. Once all of the scrambled words had been collected, divers had to unscramble them while still underwater. The water temperature in Clear Lake was around 8 or 9 °C making the deciphering of words a bit difficult for some of us. At the end of this 43 minute dive, I was thankful for the warmth provided by my drysuit. Once I was out of the water, I was even more thankful for my dive buddy, Brad Nelson. My hands were so cold that I couldn't even get myself out of my gear!

Between dives we all congregated in the warm up shelter. The fire was going, the soup was hot, burgers were on the grill, and the hot chocolate was plentiful. After about an hour and a half, divers started getting geared up for the actual pumpkin carving dive.

Carving a pumpkin underwater was the highlight of the day for me. Before going into the water, I knew that the pumpkin would be buoyant, but I wasn't really prepared for how buoyant it really was. I made a slot in the top of the pumpkin thinking that would allow water to enter the pumpkin and help it sink a bit (spoiler alert – it didn't help). I learned that a hollowed out pumpkin, even if it is full of water, will float away from you if you give it the opportunity! Fortunately, I didn't lose my pumpkin but the lid did escape my grasp.

While my pumpkin didn't win a prize, the pumpkin helmets that Brad carved for us did receive an honorable mention. Everyone who participated in the day's events received a prize courtesy of Alberta Adventure Divers and the Alberta Underwater Council.

Following the clean up, everyone was welcomed to the dive shop in Wainwright for pizza, socializing and a presentation from Connie and Dave about their recent adventure in Antarctica.

I hope to be back again next year and maybe I'll see a few more Battlefords Scuba Community Members there too.

BSC Travels continued



Pumpkin Dive

By Dennis McCullough

Every year late in September, Alberta Adventure Divers in Wainwright hosts a Pumpkin Dive. They co-sponsor the event with the Alberta Underwater Council and the main feature of the day is FUN. I think every diver should attend this event at least once – it is a phenomenal event. They are absolutely the best hosts one could ask for and the event is well run – and the prizes are unbelievable.

The event is the wrap-up for the dive season for this group. And it is a great way to end a year. There's diving, food, good people, and lots of surprises (none bad). A great deal of preparation goes into the day, preparing the lake for the divers, getting the food ready for a bunch of hungry divers and helpers, lining up the prizes, loading the trailer, and this year tarping the cook shelter to keep the heat in.

The day begins with a dive briefing so everyone can be safe, and then the dives are discussed. The first dive is always a mystery dive which is followed by a lunch break. The second dive is a pumpkin carving dive, after which judging takes place and prizes are awarded. Pretty much everyone present helps load the trailer to go back to the shop. The day winds up with everyone upstairs in the dive shop to eat pizza and watch videos or look at photos from some of the many and varied trips members have made.

The mystery dive varies from year to year. The first time I attended, the goal was to collect the correct number of pieces and the appropriate numbers of nuts and bolts to assemble a metal Ogoopogo (either under the water or at the surface). The winners were those divers with the shortest time for the event. I should mention that all dives check in with Connie as they go into the water for the diver and check out with her when done so that their times are recorded and the elapsed time is easy to calculate.

BSC News continued

This year, the mystery dive feature a word scramble. Six plastic ghostlike shapes (translucent white) were attached to various of the features in the underwater park at Clear Lake (divers were told which features had ghosts). On each ghost there were letters which when properly unscrambled formed a Hallowe'en related word. On five of the shapes there was an extra letter and when those letters were properly combined another Hallowe'en related word was made. The winners were the team with the most correct words.

After that dive everyone headed for the cook shelter when the old wood stove was fired up and there was hot soup in vast quantities. Outside the door the barbeque was doing hamburger patties and wieners so everyone could have some solid food in them when they went back in the water. The noise level was out of sight as divers chatted, making new friends and renewing old acquaintances.

Then it was off to care pumpkins underwater. The first problem was to figure out how to get the pumpkin under the water as they float – and quite well it might be added. Then how to keep it down while carving a jack-o-lantern. Oh, and did I mention, you have to control all the debris from the pumpkin so it can be taken to the surface as this is an environmentally friendly event. Time is not a factor in this event. If you don't have a pumpkin, the organizers will provide one but it might be more trouble than bringing your own – you could wind up with a monster. The bi pumpkin this year weighted about 65 pounds – carrying it on land became the first problem!

Prizes are awarded to the team with – the cleanest inside, the best fitting top, and the best overall.

The AAD trailer is there so air fills are available. If you have dealt with the shop previously and you phone in advance, they will bring out a wet suit or dry suit if you are so certified and the rest of the gear and you can meet them at the lake, use the gear and return it to the trailer and have them take it back to the shop. I won't tell you the cost because you won't believe me. And if you like, at the end of the day you can go back to the shop and buy some gear. Talk about service.

Both times I have attended, there were over 50 people out for the dive. What a gathering place for a day of fun.

The fee for the day is \$20 and for first-timers that includes an Alberta Underwater Council membership. The pizza at the shop is extra of course.

If you think this might be a way to spend a sunny, warm fall day (or maybe not so sunny and warm) watch for information. We circulate the information when we get it or you can ask Dan or Connie at the store to put you on the mailing list.



BSC News continued

SAD FAREWELL

By Dennis McCullough

It is with great sadness that we mark the death of Scott Beck of Saskatoon on November 24th, 2018. Scott passed away following a dive at Lake Diefenbaker with his dive buddies. Scott was 46 years of age and leaves a wife and 6 year old daughter to mourn the loss. Scott was an avid technical diver and rebreather diver, although at the time he was using a side-mount configuration. Scott was a PADI Instructor who did much of his training through The Diving Centre in Saskatoon, for whom he did considerable teaching. Scott was also the current President of the Saskatchewan Underwater Council. Some of the members of the BSC will remember Scott as one of the divers who came out to the Club's introduction to the world of side-mount diving last spring. The cause of death has not been released to the public but Scott was recovered at the surface and had been reportedly making his way to the shore.

Our condolences to his family and friends. His enthusiasm and his presence will be missed by all who knew him.

Impact

By Dennis McCullough

As divers, we do our thing trying not to bother others, but sometimes we take for granted that everyone is fine with our doing whatever it is that we do – or are they? The case in point involves the staff at the Aquatic Centre – young lifeguards who have the easiest job in the world – sitting around watching people having fun – young guys ogling young girls exposing lots of skin – young girls trying to catch the eye of the good looking guy with the whistle around his neck. Or sometimes it is just a young person trying to stay awake while a bunch of older folk play around with the scuba gear in the pool and then sit in the hot tub swapping yarns. Not quite so I found out one morning.

The young guard on duty during one of our regular swim sessions made a comment to the effect that many, if not most, of the guards did not want to work when the scuba group was in the pool and the scheduler sometimes had difficulty covering those shifts. Eh what? Somebody does not like our company, and would not want to be around for our monthly brunch? I had to explore that quirk for sure. A little more conversation revealed that this young lady, and a number of others, felt they did not want to be there because they did not feel they could recognize a diver who needed help, and even worse did not know what to do to help that diver if they did recognize the distress. She also felt uneasy because everything she did as an instructor and/or a lifeguard was geared toward keeping people above the water for the most part with short periods of being underwater, but we are a group who spend most of our time under the water with brief periods above. She was very much in uncharted waters – out of her comfort zone! And believe me, there is little mention in the lifeguard manuals on how to help divers – perhaps a passing mention of how to recognize a panicked diver.

BSC News continued

A bit of discussion with the senior people at the pool and we were on the slate for the next in-service training session – how do we lower the anxiety level amongst the members of this well trained group that we rely upon to keep us safe at the pool and inform them of ways they could help us. Now, here was another problem – lifeguard manuals said nothing about looking after divers but dive manuals do not address divers looking after non-diving lifeguards – we were on our own to figure something out.

We identified the types of problems we might have that a lifeguard could be required to respond to and what they might need to know to respond to those situations in a way that was fairly straightforward to the layman. We decided they needed to know that no bubbles or a steady stream of bubbles both indicated a problem. They needed to know about weight belts and quick release buckles, and they needed to know the basics of inflating (and controlling the inflation of) a BCD. And they needed to know how to remove the gear while a colleague was performing rescue breathing on the injured diver prior to getting the injured one out of the water. We could muddy the waters with a lot of details, but this was dealing with an emergency in a swimming pool so let us keep it simple.

Thus prepared, Richard Reed, Noreen Barclay, Robert and Joanne Turpin and Darren Berg and I tackled the problem with between twenty and twenty-five of the pool staff at one of their regular in-service training sessions. We talked about the simple idea that is so core to handling difficulties in diving – positive buoyancy – and how to do that. We looked the weight belts and quick releases and explained simply how to drop a weight belt at the bottom of the pool. We looked at different types of BCD's and pointed out the inflator hose. We then demonstrated how to deal with a panicked diver at the surface before having all of them try it. A little fumbling to find the inflator hose and buttons, but they got it done – and we impressed with themselves. Then we demonstrated a person with no gear diving down to surface an unresponsive diver from the bottom – drop the weight belt, add air to the BCD and control the ascent, fully inflate the BCD upon reaching the surface and tow the injured diver to the side of the pool where another lifeguard joined them from the deck to do rescue breathing while the first rescuer removed the gear. Great expressions of surprise when the goals were met! Mutterings when things did not go as they planned. Second attempts when necessary. But they all did it and in the process, they began to talk with each other about how to do “it” more effectively, how to help each other, and when they were uncertain, they asked questions.

The end result of our one hour investment of time was that all those present reported feeling better about dealing with divers in their pool. They described the session as awesome. They were lined up to try it again implementing what they had discussed with each other – but the supervisors had other things scheduled for them. But they know who we are, where to find us, and most importantly, they have an idea of what to do when they have divers.

And our divers had fun doing it, or so they reported. Thanks so much to the five of them. We'll likely do it again one of these days.

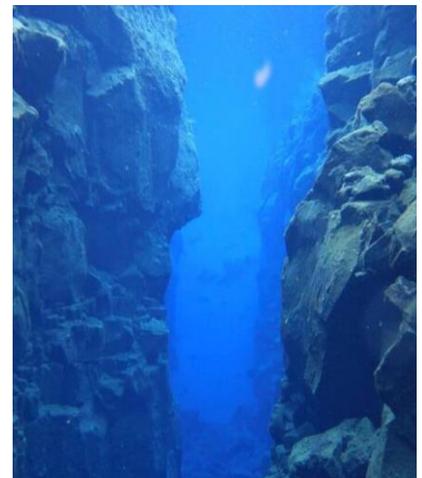
And thanks to one young lady making an observation that seemed inconsequential to start with, but had a big impact on a lot of people in a relatively short time.

BSC News continued

A Terrific Fun Lesson for All



BSC Travels continued



Water is extremely clear – visibility is almost unlimited

Parts of the dive were quite shallow. This is the lagoon where the maximum depth is 5 meters.

The deepest part of the fissure is approximately 40 meters. We did not go beyond twenty meters.

BSC Travels continued



The narrowest part of the fissure where you can touch both sides.



The water is so clear in Iceland that you can actually drink it. I removed my regulator and had a drink during a dive.



Until Next Time

Happy Diving

Forever Blowing Bubbles !